

Distribution

Although Gilliard (1969) states in the main text of his work that Standardwings are only found on the islands of Batjan and Halmahera, he notes in his appendix (p. 419) that a single specimen was collected by A. M. R. Wegner on 14 June 1953 at Bira, Obi. I examined this specimen in the Museum Zoologicum Bogoriense: it is an adult male, wing 151 mm, tail 83.4 mm, bill 31.1 mm and tarsus 40.0 mm. The original label in fact states "Bira-Bira". Examination of various maps and gazetteers of the region has failed to reveal a locality named Bira-Bira on the island of Obi, although there is a tiny islet by this name less than 2 km off the coast of Batjan (0°35'S, 127°17'E). Suitable habitat may still exist both on Obi and Batjan (MacKinnon & Artha 1981), but Indonesian place names have changed frequently during the last 40 years, and the exact provenance of this specimen must remain in doubt until further information becomes available.

Acknowledgements. I am most grateful to the staff of the Museum Zoologicum Bogoriense for permitting me to examine their collection, to my wife Caroline Ash (PhD) for her help with the typescript, to I. J. Abramson, C. Bergmann, N. Chesterfield, J. Danzenbaker and P. Kaestner for their company during the trip and not least to Dr. N. J. Collar (Red Data Book Compiler, International Council for Bird Preservation) for his generous and invaluable help and advice in preparing the manuscript.

References:

- Friedman, H. 1935. Die Balz von *Semioptera wallacei halmaherae* in Gefangenschaft. *J. Orn.* 83 (2): 283-286.
 Gilliard, E. T. 1969. *Birds of Paradise and Bowerbirds*. Weidenfeld & Nicolson: London.
 Goodfellow, W. 1927. Wallace's Bird of Paradise (*Semioptera wallacei*). *Avic. Mag.* (4) 5: 57-65.
 LeCroy, Mary. 1983. The spelling of *Semioptera wallacii* (Paradisaeidae). *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 103 (4): 144-5.
 MacKinnon, J. & Artha, M. B. 1981. National Conservation Plan for Indonesia. Vol. VII Moluku and Irian Jaya. Field Report of UNDP/FAO National Park Development Project INS/78/061.
 Smiet, F. 1982. Threats to the Spice Islands. *Oryx* (16) 4: 323-328.
 Wallace, A. R. 1869. *The Malay Archipelago*. Dover Publications Reprint (1962). New York.

Address: K. D. Bishop, 21a Newton Road, Cambridge CB2 2AL, U.K.

© British Ornithologists' Club 1984.

A new race of Red-billed Oxpecker *Buphagus erythrorhynchus* from Kenya

by G. R. Cunningham – van Someren

Received 22 February 1984

While working through a series of Red-billed Oxpeckers in the National Museum, Nairobi, Kenya, 3 richly coloured specimens were found that are quite distinct from all other races described from Ethiopia, Somalia, Uganda and Kenya which should be recognised as

Buphagus erythrorhynchus archeri subsp. nov.

Holotype. Reg. No. 15491/1263 in National Museum, Nairobi, Kenya, collected at Archer's Post on the Ewaso Ng'iro River, Samburu District (37°40'E, 0°40'N) at 3000 ft on 3 Aug 1961 by A. L. Archer.

Description. (Colour nomenclature from Smithe's Naturalist Colour Guide: The American Museum of Natural History.) Whole head and throat with 'pinkish tinge' Drab (27). Mantle, back, scapulars, secondaries to rump Dark Drab (119B). Rectrices upperside Hair Brown (119A) with grey reflection and faint bars, underside Cinnamon Drab (219C). Upper breast Sayal Brown (223C) merging below to Tawny Olive (223D) with belly, flanks and undertail-coverts Pale Pinkish Buff (121D). Primaries upper surface Olive-Brown (28) outer web darker, underside paler. Alula black. Bill red, iris orange-red and orbital ring yellow. Legs and toes dark brown. Compared with nominate *erythrorhynchus* and the grey *B.e. invictus* it is brighter browner.

Weights (g) and measurements (mm). ♂ holotype, wing 105.0, tail 85.0, exposed culmen 17.0, weight 46.0. Paratype, ♂ same day and place, wing 109.0, tail 85.0, exposed culmen 17.0, weight 47.5 (Reg. No. 15490/1263). Included within the range of this new subsp. is a ♂ (Reg. No. 15492/1263) from Ruiru, Kenya, 37°0'E, 1°15'S, collected on 31 Jan 1961 at 5000 ft. Wing 110.0, tail 93.0, exposed culmen 18.0.

Distribution. Samburu District of northern Kenya south to Ukambani, Ruiru and the upper Tana River in dry Acacia bushland between 3000 and 5000 ft.

Remarks. This small richly coloured race has been compared with both the nominate *B.e. erythrorhynchus* from Ethiopia and the "smallest and palest" form *B.e. invictus* from Somalia, whose range is given by Clancey (1962) as "Somalia, to adjacent Abyssinia (Ogaden) and the eastern Kenya Colony", as well as with a series from the highlands of western Kenya and Uganda and with *B.e. scotinus* from eastern Tanzania. This new race occupies the semi-arid Acacia-Commiphora bushland ecosystem with less than 400 mm rainfall, thus separating the population of the small *B.e. invictus* from the larger birds of the moister Kenya highlands over 5000 ft, *B.e. caffer* and from the nominate of the Ethiopian highlands.

Reference:

Clancey, P. A. 1962. An additional race of *Buphagus erythrorhynchus* (Stanley) from the Somali Arid District. *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 82: 19-20.

Address: G. R. Cunningham - van Someren, National Museums of Kenya, Department of Ornithology, P.O. Box 40658, Nairobi, Kenya.

© British Ornithologists' Club 1984.

The last St. Kitts Bullfinch *Loxigilla portoricensis grandis* (Emberizinae) and the extinction of its race

by Storrs L. Olson

Received 20 March 1984

The island of St. Kitts, in the northern Lesser Antilles, was once inhabited by a large endemic subspecies *Loxigilla portoricensis grandis* Lawrence of the Puerto Rican Bullfinch *Loxigilla p. portoricensis* Daudin. The form was known previously only from 9 specimens collected by F. A. Ober in 1880, whereafter it could no longer be found and was presumed extinct (Danforth 1936). Possible explanations for the disappearance of this population were discussed by Raffaele (1977). Bond (1936, 1956) originally proposed that the birds had been eliminated by the monkey *Cercopithecus aethiops* that was introduced to the island before